



EMOTIONAL WELLNESS: A CATALYST FOR SOCIAL CHANGE

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ABSTRACT

Adolescence is a critical period of emotional development, marked by significant physical, social, and psychological changes. The rising mental health concerns, such as anxiety, depression, and stress, threaten the emotional stability of teenagers. Emotional wellness is a salient predictor of healthy development, academic success, and adolescent mental health outcomes. However, adolescents are increasingly confronted with a myriad of challenges to emotional wellness, including the pernicious effects of social media, bullying, and limited access to mental health resources. The scope of Emotional Wellness among adolescent students is a complex and multifaceted construct that encompasses the cognitive, emotional, and behavioural aspects of an individual's life. As adolescents navigate significant physical, social, and emotional changes, Emotional Wellness plays a critical role in shaping their experiences, relationships, and future opportunities. This study aims to advance understanding of adolescent Emotional Wellness through a quantitative research method, informing evidence-based interventions and support systems. The result reveals that the Emotional Wellness of Girls is higher than that of Boys. Also, rural students were found to have higher Emotional Wellness than urban students. The findings highlight the importance of self-awareness, emotional regulation, and resilience in promoting emotional wellness. The study's insights will promote implications for parents, educators, healthcare providers, and policymakers, underscoring the need for collaborative efforts to promote adolescent Emotional Wellness and support the development of happy, healthy, and resilient individuals. This research paper explores adolescent Emotional Wellness, examining its significance, influencing factors, and impact on life outcomes.

KEYWORDS: Emotional Wellness, Emotional Stability, Self-Awareness, Self-Acceptance, Emotional Regulation, Resilience

INTRODUCTION

As young individuals navigate this transformative period, they face unique challenges that can impact their emotional well-being. Emotional Wellness during adolescence is crucial for healthy development, academic success, and long-term mental health. However, the complexities of the modern period, including social media, peer pressure, and societal expectations all influences Emotional Wellness. This research inquiry aims to explore the factors influencing adolescent Emotional Well-being, identify potential vulnerabilities, and inform evidence-based strategies for promoting healthy emotional development during this critical life stage. By examining the intricacies of adolescent Emotional Wellness, the factor contributing development of effective interventions and support systems that foster resilience, well-being, and optimal growth among young people.

Emotional Wellness is essential for, maintaining good mental health, building strong relationships, achieving personal growth, and promoting resilience, as it helps to prevent mental health issues, fosters healthy connections, enables self-awareness and self-acceptance, and develops coping skills. Additionally, emotional wellness links to better physical health, improved decision-making, enhanced productivity, effective communication, and increased happiness, ultimately contributing to holistic well-being. Prioritizing emotional wellness is vital, especially in adolescence, where it helps

manage emotions, develop self-awareness and self-esteem, build resilience, foster positive relationships, enhance problem-solving skills, improve academic performance, reduce stress and anxiety, promote healthy behaviours, support personal growth, and encourage effective communication. By attaining Emotional Wellness, individuals can lead happy, healthy, and fulfilling lives, navigating life's challenges with emotional intelligence, resilience, and a positive mindset.

Need and Significance of the Study

Emotional Wellness encompasses more than the absence of mental health challenges; it involves cultivating emotional intelligence, self-awareness, and effective coping mechanisms essential for life's complexities. It becomes a cornerstone in education, fostering an environment conducive to learning, collaboration, and individual development. This facet significantly impacts various life aspects, intricately connecting to mental health and offering a foundation for coping with stress, fostering stability, and building resilience. Prioritizing Emotional Wellness extends positive effects to physical health, reducing the risk of stress-related illnesses. Emotionally resilient individuals exhibit proactive approaches to challenges, benefiting decision-making and career success. On a personal level, emotional wellness intertwines with self-esteem, promoting confidence and a positive self-image. Adopting healthy coping mechanisms contributes to overall well-being, and emotionally matured individuals report heightened life

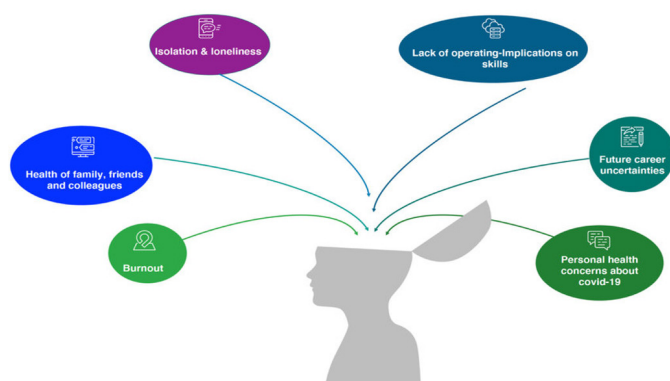
satisfaction, pursuing meaningful goals, and nurturing positive relationships. This positive influence extends to creating supportive and harmonious environment in personal, parenting, and professional settings. Gaining emotional wellness leads to a more resilient, positive, and rewarding life journey.

It is crucial due to growing mental health concerns, limited research, and profound impact on life outcomes. It aims to address the increasing prevalence of anxiety, depression, and stress among teenagers, filling the knowledge gap in adolescent emotional wellness. By exploring this critical aspect of development, the study imparts effective interventions, enhance support systems, reduce stigma, and promote holistic development. Ultimately, it empowers adolescents to develop self-awareness, self-regulation, and resilience, navigating life's challenges with confidence. The research has far-reaching implications, including advancing understanding, informing evidence-based practices, promoting well-being, and encouraging open conversations about mental health. This study investigates how these dimensions relate to adolescent emotional wellness and what implications they have for promoting healthy emotional development. Specifically, the study examines how adolescents develop emotional self-awareness, cultivate self-acceptance, develop emotional self-responsibility, pursue self-actualization, form interpersonal relationships, and develop effective coping strategies for managing stress, and how these dimensions impact their emotional wellness.

Emotional Challenges Among Adolescent Students

- Hormonal changes lead to mood swings, emotional instability, and increased sensitivity.
- Social pressures, including peer relationships, bullying, and social media expectations.
- Academic stress leads to stress, anxiety, and burnout.
- Identity formation causes confusion, uncertainty, and emotional turmoil.

Consequences of Neglecting Emotional Wellness



Mental health issues like depression, anxiety, and eating disorders.

- Decreased academic performance due to emotional distress.
- Impaired relationships with family, friends, and peers.
- Increased risk-taking behaviour, such as substance abuse or reckless behaviour.

Theoretical Aspects of Emotional Wellness

Adolescence is a time of rapid physical, cognitive, social, and emotional development, and the experiences of those aged 10-19 years have profound impacts on their well-being both in the shorter and the longer term (WHO). Emotional wellness is the ability to navigate life's challenges with emotional intelligence, resilience, and a positive mindset, encompassing various aspects such as self-awareness, self-acceptance, emotional regulation, motivation, empathy, resilience, positive relationships, and overall well-being. This enables effective management of emotions and coping with stress and adversity. This study examines the application of the Six Dimensions of Emotional Wellness, as defined by the National Wellness Institute (NWI) in 1976, to enhance understanding of adolescent emotional wellness. The NWI defines emotional wellness as comprising six dimensions: self-awareness, self-acceptance, self-responsibility, self-actualization, interpersonal relationships, and coping with stress. By examining the theoretical aspects of the six dimensions of emotional wellness, this study aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of adolescent emotional wellness and inform strategies for promoting healthy emotional development.

Emotional wellness has become a critical aspect of overall well-being, influencing not only individual health but also social relationships and community dynamics. This concept is deeply rooted in various theoretical frameworks that highlight the interconnectedness of emotional wellness, social change, and community development. Emotional wellness is a fundamental human need, essential for personal growth and self-actualization. When emotional wellness is achieved, individuals are more likely to engage in prosocial behaviors, contributing to social change (Maslow, 1943). Emotional wellness can enhance self-efficacy, encouraging individuals to engage in social change efforts (Bandura, 1986). Emotional Wellness is a state

Self-Determination Theory (SDT) posits that emotional wellness is influenced by three innate psychological needs: autonomy, competence, and relatedness (Deci & Ryan, 2000).

Objectives of the study:

1. To find out the extend of Emotional Wellness among the total sample.
2. To find out the level of Emotional Wellness of high school students based on sub-sample Gender and Locale.

Hypothesis

- There exists a significant difference in the mean scores of Emotional Wellness of high school students based on Gender and Locale.

METHODOLOGY

Survey method was adopted for the study. Investigator developed Emotional Wellness scale to measure the Emotional Wellness of adolescent students.

Sample

The study was conducted on a sample of 370 high school

students from six schools in Kozhikode District. The sample were selected under stratified random sampling technique by giving due representation of the factors like gender of the pupils and Locale of the school

Tool Used for the Study

Emotional Wellness Scale, prepared and standardized by the investigator, was used to collect data.

Based on the components, the investigator developed the Emotional Wellness Scale. The Scale consists of 66 items, 51 of which are positive statements and 15 of which are negative statements. The validity of the questionnaire was ensured by using face validity and content validity.

Components	Items
1. Self-Acceptance	1, 5, 15, 21, 27, 33, 39, 46, 51, 54, 57, 65
2. Autonomy	7, 12, 17, 23, 29, 35, 41, 47, 56, 62, 66
3. Resilience	2, 6, 11, 16, 22, 28, 34, 40, 45, 55, 60
4. Mindfulness	8, 14, 18, 24, 30, 36, 42, 48, 52, 58, 63
5. Ability to Manage Strong Emotion	3, 9, 13, 17, 19, 25, 31, 37, 43, 49, 61
6. Optimism	4, 10, 20, 26, 32, 38, 44, 50, 53, 59

The tool possesses essential criteria of Reliability and Validity.

Statistical Techniques

Percentile Analysis

Independent Sample T Test

Analysis and Interpretation

The data was analysed with percentile analysis and independent sample t-test.

N	370
Mean	250.59
Median	251.00
Mode	251.82
Std. Deviation	24.11
Skewness	.092
Kurtosis	-.770

Table 1: Preliminary Analysis of the Emotional Wellness of Adolescent Students for the Total Sample and Subsample

Table 1 shows that the mean, median, mode is 250.59, 251.00, 251.82; kurtosis value is .770 and SD shows 24.11, skewness is .092 for total sample.

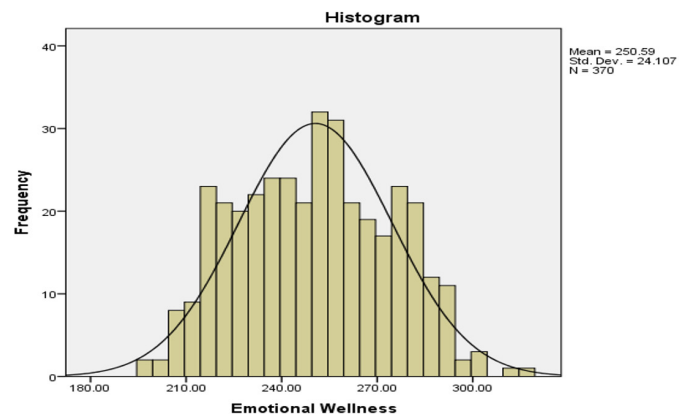


Figure 1: Frequency Curve of the Variable Emotional Wellness for the Total Sample

Percentile	Percentile Value
10	219.0000
20	227.0000
30	236.0000
40	242.0000
50	251.0000
60	258.0000
70	264.0000
80	274.8000
90	283.0000

Table 2: Percentile Norms of Emotional Wellness for the Total Sample

Table 2 shows that the 10th percentile of Emotional Wellness of adolescent students is 219. That means Emotional Wellness score of 10 percent of adolescent students is below score of 219. The 50th percentile $P_{50} = 251.00$ which means below and above the score is 251.00 an equal number of adolescent students' scores found. Similarly, we can interpret all other percentiles.

The mean score obtained for students was 250.59, between the 40th and 50th percentile. The 50th percentile of Emotional Wellness of adolescent students is 251.00, and the 60th percentile score is 258.00. Hence, it can be concluded that the Emotional Wellness of adolescent students is satisfactory.

Sample	N	Mean	SD	t value	P
Boys	176	240.71	19.55	8.14**	<.01
Girls	194	259.54	24.38		

** < .01

Table 3: Test of Significant Difference Between Mean Scores of Emotional Wellness based on Gender

Table 3 shows that there exists a significant difference between Boys and Girls in the mean scores of Emotional Wellness. The obtained t value is 8.140 which is significant at 0.01 level.

The mean score of Girls is higher than that of Boys, indicating that Girls have higher Emotional Wellness than Boys.

The significant difference between mean scores of Emotional Wellness based on locale is given in Table 4

Sample	N	Mean	SD	t value	P
Rural	200	259.85	22.65	9.56**	<.01
Urban	170	238.43	20.31		

** < .01

Table 4: Test of significant difference between mean scores of Emotional Wellness for the subsample based on Locale

Table 4 shows that there exists a significant difference between Rural and Urban students in the mean scores of Emotional Wellness. The obtained t value is 9.56 which is significant at 0.01 level. The mean scores of Rural students are higher than that of Urban students which indicates that Rural students have higher Emotional Wellness than Urban students.

FINDINGS

1. Gender Difference: A significant difference exists in the mean scores of Emotional Wellness between boys and girls (t-value = 8.140, $p < 0.01$).
2. Locale Difference: A significant difference exists in the mean scores of Emotional Wellness between rural and urban students (t-value = 9.56, $p < 0.01$).

The hypothesis stating a significant difference in Emotional Wellness among high school students based on gender and locale is accepted.

Educational Implications

Emotional wellness has a profound impact on life, leading to numerous benefits for students. Improved academic performance is achieved through better emotional regulation, while increased motivation and interest in learning are sparked by positive emotional states. Emotional wellness also fosters enhanced creativity, imagination, and innovative thinking. Additionally, it leads to better relationships with peers and teachers, reduced absenteeism due to lower stress, anxiety, depression, improved self-esteem and self-confidence. Students develop resilience and adaptability, and bullying and conflicts decrease through emotional intelligence and empathy.

- Furthermore, emotional wellness increases empathy and compassion, leading to better teacher-student relationships, an improved school climate and culture, and reduced drop-out rates. Ultimately, emotional wellness prepares students for life with essential skills like self-awareness, self-regulation, and relationship skills, leading to increased student engagement and participation. By prioritizing emotional wellness, educators can create a supportive learning environment that fosters academic success, social skills, and lifelong well-being. It emphasizes the need for holistic approaches that address the complex needs of adolescents.
- The findings contribute to breaking down the stigma surrounding mental health discussions, empowering adolescents to manage their emotions and thrive. The potential to shape resilient, motivated, and emotionally well-equipped individuals demands a collective

commitment to redefine the educational narrative.

- Stakeholders, policymakers, and practitioners are urged to catalyze a transformative journey, fostering academically proficient individuals and compassionate, adaptable, and emotionally resilient global citizens.

Strategies to Promote Emotional Wellness

- Mindfulness and self-care practices, such as meditation and deep breathing.
- Social-emotional learning (SEL) integrated into the curriculum.
- Positive relationships between students, teachers, and family members.
- Access to mental health resources, including counselling services and hotlines.

Emotional wellness plays a vital role in the lives of adolescent students, as it impacts their mental health, academic performance, and overall quality of life. By prioritizing emotional wellness, students can reap numerous benefits, including better academic performance, improved mental health, enhanced relationships, increased resilience, and better decision-making. However, several challenges can hinder emotional wellness, such as academic pressure, social media, peer relationships, family dynamics, and mental health stigma. To overcome these challenges, it is essential to implement strategies that promote emotional wellness, including mindfulness and self-care, social-emotional learning, positive relationships, access to mental health resources, and open communication. By acknowledging the importance of emotional wellness and taking proactive steps to support it, we can empower adolescent students to develop the skills and resilience needed to thrive in an ever-changing world.

CONCLUSION

As much as poor emotional health can make for major problems in life, having strong emotional wellness can help to thrive. Some of the many benefits of having good emotional well-being are reducing stress, reduces illness and increases immunity.

The present study highlights the importance of Emotional Wellness which is crucial for adolescents. It impacts their academic performance, social relationships, and mental health. Emotional wellness is essential for adolescents current and future well-being. Therefore, educators, policymakers, and caregivers should work together to create supportive environments that promote emotional growth, positive relationships, and life skills. More research is needed to find effective ways to support adolescents' unique emotional needs. By prioritizing emotional wellness, we can help adolescents succeed in all areas of life.

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